

34 More Victim of Arbitrary
Government.

beyond the ocean, as well as in exploring old manuscripts. It was written in Latin, and published in the beginning of 1516, but it is best known in Robinson's quaint translation, which appeared in 1551, and has all the charms of the English of More's own time.

More had both personal and public reasons for hating some of the abuses of arbitrary government which he so skilfully assailed. He had opposed Henry the Seventh's exorbitant demand for an aid on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter Margaret with James IV., in the Parliament of 1503. The Commons were about to comply, when young More (he was only twenty-five, and was probably the youngest member present) rose and spoke so forcibly against it that they offered £30,000 instead of £115,000. Henry was very angry with the rising young London lawyer, whose eloquence had wounded him in a very vulnerable point—his love of money. He took his revenge on his father, whom he threw into the Tower, and only released on payment of a fine of £100. During the remainder of his reign More's prospects were blighted by the king's hostility, and he had some thoughts of turning monk. He lived in constant apprehension of his life, and sought consolation in the ardent study of the classics, and in writing epigrams against tyranny, and in praise of constitutional government. It is not surprising, therefore, that he rejoiced at the death of his oppressor and greeted the accession of Henry VIII., from whom he had reason to expect more just treatment, in verses of exuberant congratulation. His advance under the new king's patronage was rapid. He was made Under Sheriff of London and a Commissioner of Sewers, sprang into a lucrative practice at the bar, and in 1515 became a member of a political embassy to the Netherlands. Utopia is a fact professedly made known to him while at Antwerp, where he meets the Portuguese traveller, Raphael, who was introduced to him by Peter Giles, a citizen of that town, and relates his adventures among the Utopians. He had, however, by this time ample inducement for the composition of "Utopia," on public as well as private grounds. The French war of Henry VIII. had exhausted the treasure left by his father, and drained the country of large sums in the shape of taxes. The exhaustion of the nation